Welcome to the RSH webinar

@SafeguardingRSH

Protection is possible. How an innovative operating model strengthened safeguarding for the Girls' Education Challenge!

Starting soon

Panellists:

Harriet Kolli - Safeguarding Consultant, Girls' Education Challenge
Naima Chohan - Head of Technical Excellence, International Rescue Committee Pakistan
Joy Khangati - Initiative Manager, Adolescent Girls Education in Somalia (AGES)
Danielle Cornish-Spencer - Safeguarding Lead, Girls' Education Challenge

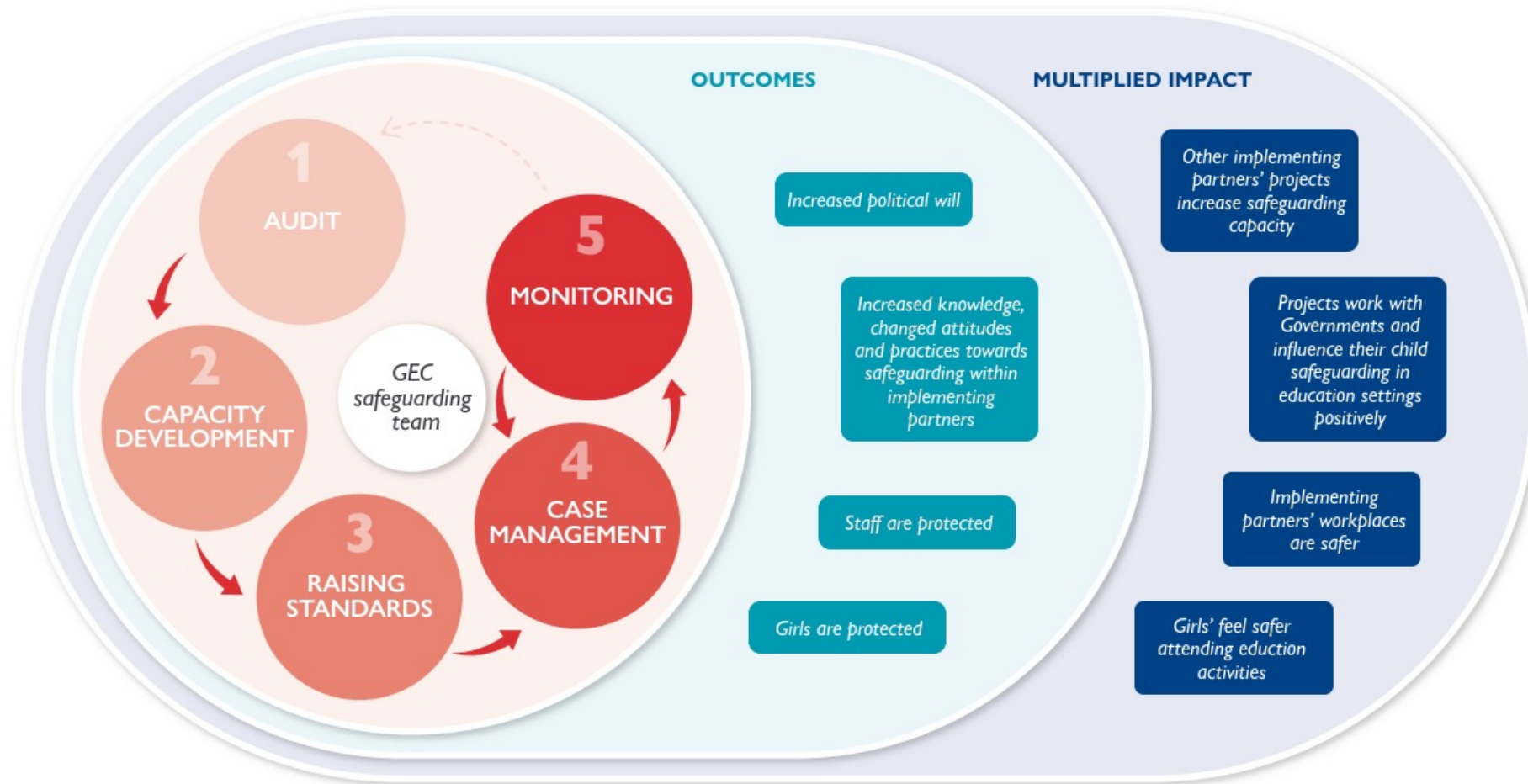Chair: Peter Taylor - Head of the Safeguarding Unit, FCDO

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Protection is possible

How an innovative operating model strengthened safeguarding for the Girls' Education Challenge

Girls'
Education
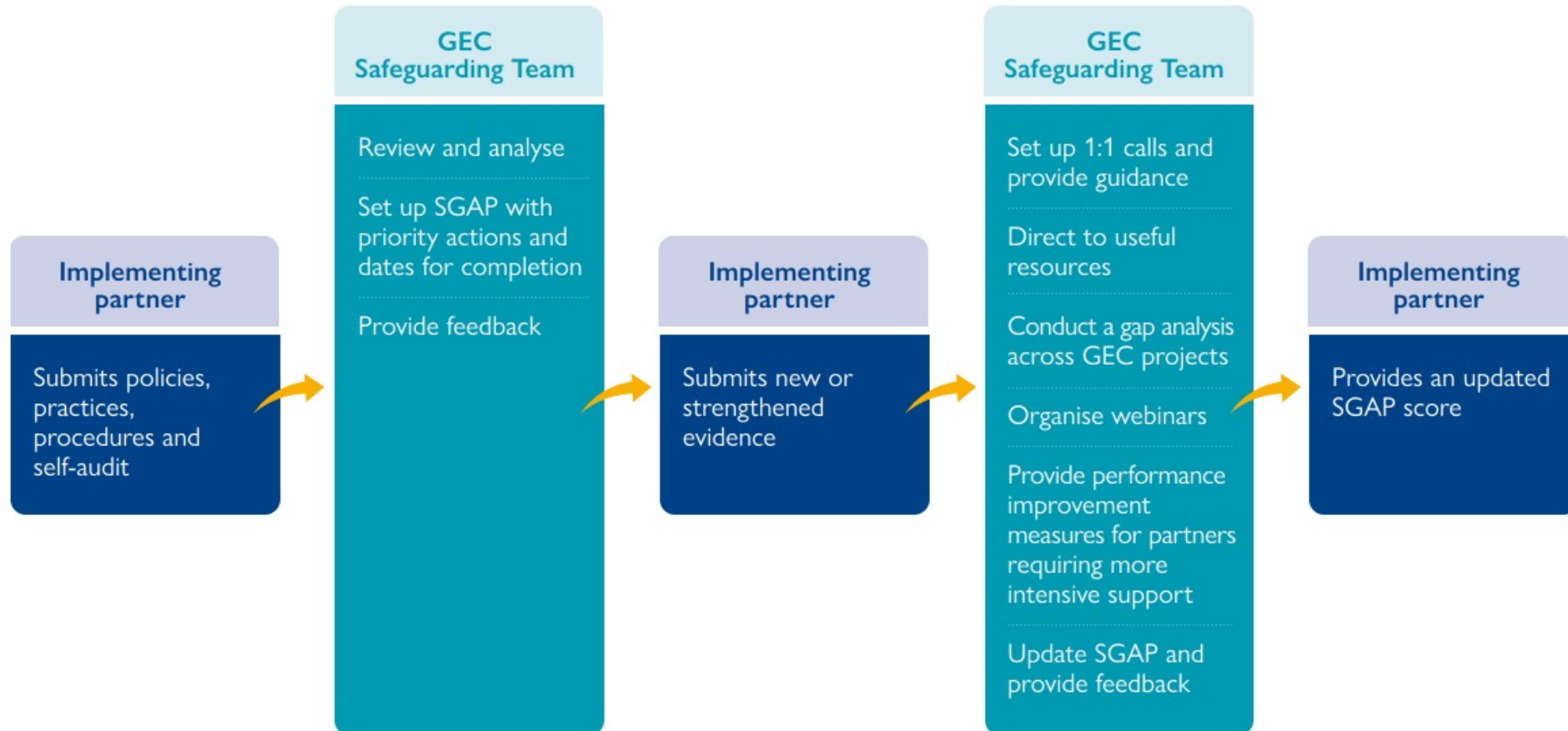Challenge

UKaid
from the British people

RESOURCE
&SUPPORT
HUB

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An innovative model

GEC's Safeguarding Operating Model (1)

GEC's Safeguarding Operating Model (2)

Implementing partner
Submits policies, practices, procedures and self-audit

GEC Safeguarding Team
- Review and analyse
- Set up SGAP with priority actions and dates for completion
- Provide feedback

Implementing partner
Submits new or strengthened evidence

GEC Safeguarding Team
- Set up 1:1 calls and provide guidance
- Direct to useful resources
- Conduct a gap analysis across GEC projects
- Organise webinars
- Provide performance improvement measures for partners requiring more intensive support
- Update SGAP and provide feedback

Implementing partner
Provides an updated SGAP score

2 full-time staff members | **2** part-time staff members | **9** Safeguarding Champions
within the GEC Safeguarding Team

100s of implementing partners; review of several hundred policies, practices and procedures

41 Safeguarding Action Plans developed

Average of **1 year** for GEC projects in LNGB portfolio to reach 90% -100% on their SGAPs

Approx. **2,460** actions (average of 60 actions per project) created across GEC implementing partners to be evidenced, updated and progressively marked as completed within SGAPs

MORE ON: COMMON GAPS

Common gaps found within implementing partners' safeguarding policies, practices and procedures and some of the solutions offered to implementing partners to support them in filling those gaps

STANDARD	COMMON GAPS FOUND WHEN REVIEWING SAFEGUARDING FRAMEWORKS IN 2019	COMMON SOLUTIONS AND COMMONLY SHARED RESOURCES WITH IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS
1. SAFEGUARDING		
Standard 1 (Core): All organisations receiving GEC funding must have either an overarching/combined safeguarding policy or a combination of relevant policies which address bullying, sexual harassment and abuse targeted at both beneficiaries, including adults at risk, partner staff and staff within an organisation. **Standard 2 (Core):** All organisations must have a separate child safeguarding policy which addresses all forms of sexual, physical and emotional violence towards children.	• Policies were sometimes incomplete: child-focused organisations had child safeguarding policies in place, but no policies on sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment (SEAH). Adult-focused organisations had SEAH policies but little in place regarding child safeguarding. Some policies were not survivor centred or did not explicitly cover behaviour within and outside of working hours through their code of conduct. • Bullying policies often did not include a wide range of protected characteristics (e.g., as listed in the UK 2010 Equality Act). • Many implementing partners' media policies did not include references on how to work with survivors and allowed for media stories and photos to be taken of child survivors. Media policies were likely to not have a limit on use of materials, meaning that permission to use the materials could not be granted with informed consent. • Downstream partners did not have policies in place, only had some policies, or had insufficient policies that required further strengthening. Lead implementing partners had a responsibility to work with their own partners to help them to strengthen their frameworks. • Policies were often global or generic and not localised or translated.	• The GEC Safeguarding Team worked with implementing partners by providing concrete feedback on policies, suggesting changes needed along with reasons changes would strengthen their policies, procedures and training materials. • External resources were often shared from the BOND website, which provides useful policy template tools, as does British Council's writing safeguarding policy guidance. • Example, external resources shared on safeguarding and Information Communication Technology: Keeping Children Safe Online, Child Safeguarding Guidance for Journalists, and The Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's Child Protection Guidenace Note on Use of Images and Social Media.

Achievements

BECACAUSE:

41 GEC projects, delivered through hundreds of implementing partners, were assessed and supported to improve their safeguarding prevention, mitigation, reporting and response.

The average proportion of GEC implementing partners meeting the GEC Safeguarding Minimum Standards went from **30% in 2019 to 98% at the end of 2020[2].**

2,460 separate actions were taken to address gaps across the 41 GEC implementing partners' policies, practices and procedures. Actions ranged from writing or redrafting entire policies, setting up appropriate and accessible reporting and accountability mechanisms, to writing specific education focused classroom behaviour protocols.

THEN:

There was a **341% increase in the reporting of incidents** from 2018 to 2020 (from 41 cases reported in 2018 to 181 cases reported in 2020), with extensive support provided to projects to help them respond appropriately.[3] The reports numbered more cases submitted to FCDO than any other fund or organisation.

Case handling improved, including the embedding of survivor-centred approaches by implementing partners.

Standardised tools and resources were developed and shared within the sector and between implementing partners and government entities.

Girls are now accessing safer education

What does this mean?

Why is this important?

- Protection is possible
- The GEC's Safeguarding Operating Model has demonstrated that large-scale shifts in meeting the GEC Safeguarding
Minimum Standards and capacity can be achieved across the development sector through oversight and accountability mechanisms being put in place and that a supportive, non-judgmental environment is key to this success

SECTOR TRANSFORMATION

Although the system and the approach developed by the GEC in order to mitigate risk is innovative, practical and demonstrates that protection is possible when safeguarding is strengthened – it is not a panacea nor is it a substitute for the larger, radical changes that have been agreed at the 2018 Safeguarding Summit and beyond. It is important to reflect that the GEC Minimum Standards are minimum. Safeguarding in the development sector is a process and for lasting change to be seen and for incidents to drop, there needs to be greater equality and a deeper review of power across the sector.[15] Although change in the sector is underway, safeguarding incidents will continue to occur – within every context and every organisation – until the structural and societal inequalities at the heart of these abuses are addressed. The GEC's Safeguarding Operating Model offers a means to effectively progress high risk projects to reach meaningful compliance, but can only be seen as a set of tools that should be delivered in tandem with larger, sector-wide transformational change.

Message 1: "Move beyond compliance"

1. Listen to those at risk, particularly women and girls
2. Look beyond a policy-level, traditional approach
3. Focus on prioritising actions which have a direct impact on survivors first
4. Acknowledge that the sector is learning
5. The SGAP process and case work should be responsive to one another, not separated
6. Assess risk against capacity to meet the standards and numbers of cases reported, to address under-reporting
7. Ensure the safeguarding sector is learning from the gender-based violence and child protection sector

Message 2: "Line up resources"

1. Fund safeguarding experts and fund the work

2. Ensure violence response services exist, are safe for survivors to attend and response systems are strengthened in a sustainable way

3. Funding opportunities for gender transformative women's and girls' education, empowerment, reproductive health and rights programming should routinely include resources for prevention of and response to gender-based violence

4. There is no quick fix and minimum standards are exactly that – the minimum

What did implementing the GEC's Safeguarding Model allow you to achieve?

ACHIEVEMENTS - Naima Chohan, TEACH Pakistan

Sharing the power with clients

- Client responsiveness
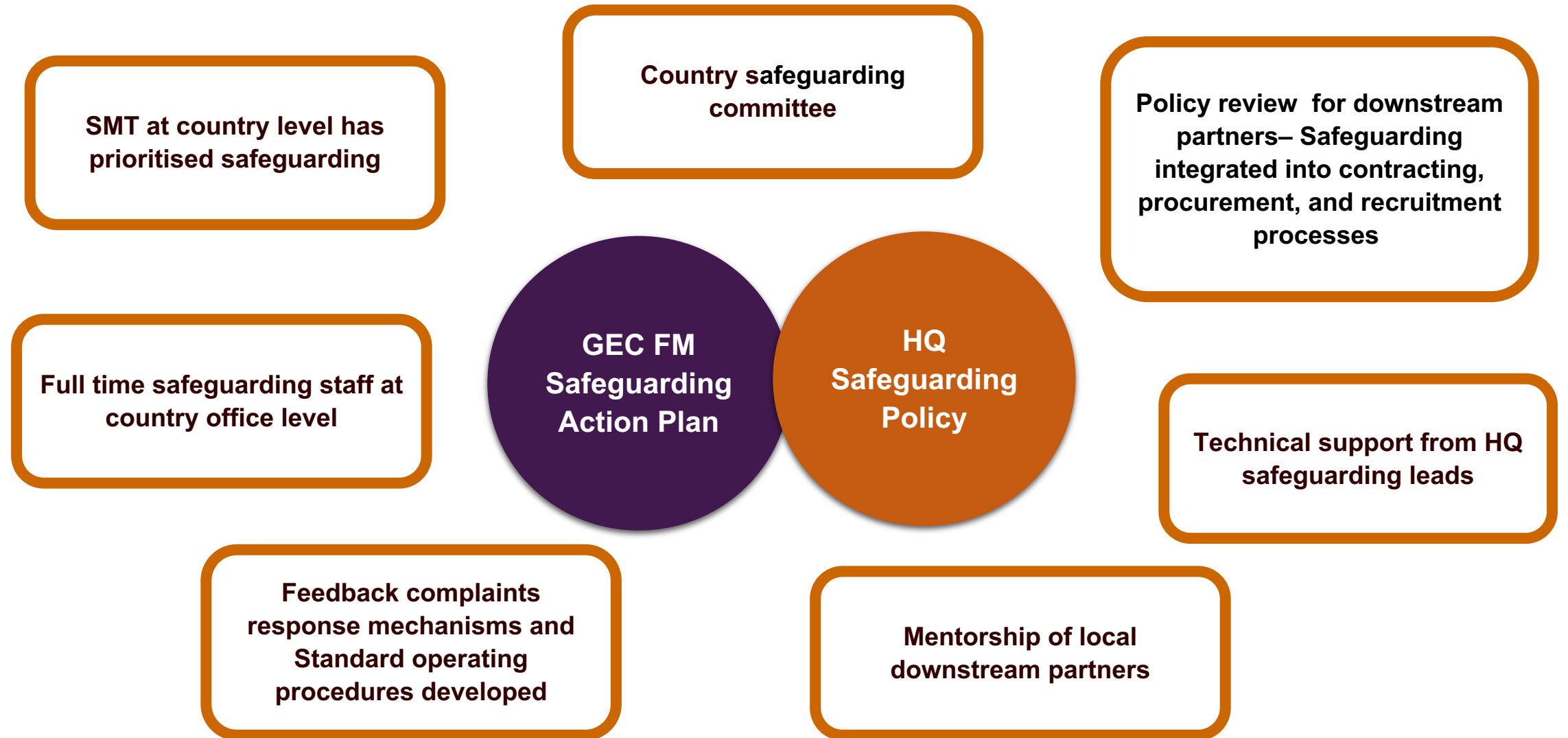- Raising voices
- Empowerment of the clients

Self-sustained system; *a longer-term investment*

- Client and staff safeguarding policies
- Protocol and procedures
- Reporting channels
- Enhanced capacities

Safe Programming

- Connectedness with clients
- Do no harm assessment - project design
- Resource allocation for safe programming
- Risk management
- Improved MEL

ACHIEVEMENTS - Joy Khangati, AGES Somalia

SMT at country level has prioritised safeguarding

Country safeguarding committee

Policy review for downstream partners– Safeguarding integrated into contracting, procurement, and recruitment processes

GEC FM Safeguarding Action Plan

HQ Safeguarding Policy

Full time safeguarding staff at country office level

Technical support from HQ safeguarding leads

Feedback complaints response mechanisms and Standard operating procedures developed

Mentorship of local downstream partners

What is the biggest challenge you faced when implementing the GEC's Safeguarding Model?

CHALLENGES - Naima Chohan, TEACH Pakistan

Community

- Cultural, social and religious norms and values
- Lack of reporting due to:
- Lack of awareness about safeguarding issues and reporting channels
- Low / no literacy levels
- Access to safe, appropriate reporting channels
- Fear of victimization / Stigmatization leading to severe consequences

Partners

- Safeguarding / protection policies either did not exist, not updated or not in practice
- Weak / non existent reporting, investigation and response procedures
- Resource constraints

IRC

- Staff capacity / understanding of policies and procedures at all levels
- Child / user friendly IEC material and channels
- Referral and response mechanisms to support survivors
- Safeguarding risk analysis

Stigma
Acceptance of inappropriate attitudes and behavior due to cultural influence
Weak Legal Cover

CHALLENGES - Joy Khangati, AGES Somalia

- Mentorship process of downstream partners was lengthy and costly to organisations who did not have adequate resources
- Emerging and unplanned costs to set up reporting channels, we had to identify costs and seek funding for implementation
- The feedback, accountability and complaints mechanism is newly introduced to beneficiaries and its uptake has been slow. Some of the identified safeguarding concerns are not perceived to be concerns in the traditional context
- As a result of insecurity in parts of Somalia, it has been challenging for us and partners to investigate some of the cases that have been reported due to risks to staff, and not being able to operate transparently. We are exploring alternatives, such as training MoE staff to undertake field investigations
- With the onset of COVID-19, we realized that parameters for safer communication between programme participants had not been defined. This was responded to by the development of safe communication standard operating procedures

What will be the legacy of implementing the GEC's Safeguarding Model in your organisation?

LEGACY - Naima Chohan, TEACH Pakistan

LEGACY - Joy Khangati, AGES Somalia

Notable legacies at the country office level include:

- Established Safeguarding Committee for all programming
- Integrated safeguarding into policies, contracts across the country office operations
- Dedicated safeguarding staffing positions
- Integrated safeguarding into partner audits across the country office operations
- Closer coordination between HQ Safeguarding Focal Points to coordinate on best practices

Girls' Education Challenge Safeguarding Toolbox

GEC Safeguarding Toolbox (pg. 38-39)

- [GEC Safeguarding Policy](#)
- [GEC Due Diligence Tool](#)
- [GEC RAAG and Risk Guidance](#)
- [GEC Safeguarding Action Plan (SGAP) Template](#)
- [Common Technical Gaps Table](#)
- [GEC Safeguarding and Evaluation Guidance](#)
- [GEC Safeguarding Champion Terms of Reference](#)
- [GEC Service Mapping Tool](#)
- [GEC Safeguarding Concern Categories](#)

GEC Safeguarding Monitoring Toolbox (pg. 38-39)

- GEC Distance Monitoring Tool
- GEC Safeguarding Project Visit Debrief Questions
- GEC Safeguarding Non-specialist Monitoring Tool
- GEC Safeguarding Safety Audit Tool for Specialists and Non-Specialists
- GEC Safeguarding Monitoring Checklist
- GEC Safeguarding Monitoring: Culture, Enabling Environment and Implementation
- GEC Safeguarding Monitoring: Policy and Compliance.

GEC Adapted Distance Monitoring Experience

How did projects benefit from distance monitoring?

Projects were able to use some of the findings to identify and acknowledge capacity gaps. For example, some projects that reported high level of protection concerns and reporting mechanisms were able to explore partnership and coordination with other service providers

Generate evidence of knowledge on some policy areas e.g. demonstrated knowledge on the code of conduct and their prohibitions

Evident knowledge of referral services and safeguarding reporting frameworks even though this is an area that called for further action in building consistent knowledge and basic referral principles

Build consistent understanding of safeguarding responsibilities for both Safeguarding focal persons and for field staff based on their individual responses

It is still possible to practice data collection ethics and safeguards even with distance monitoring

Why do we need these tools?

- Show of real commitment and accountability towards safeguarding communities, target beneficiaries, staff and resources. Especially for leadership, NGOs, donors, corporates and institution which eventually leads to trust
- Evidence based capacity building/planning
- General values appreciation and Safe workspaces for all
- Evidence of function of safeguarding systems e.g. reporting and case handling framework, whistle blower policies etc.
- Evidence for value for money – resources are used appropriately to benefit communities
- User friendly and can be adapted by anyone - and easy to analyze data
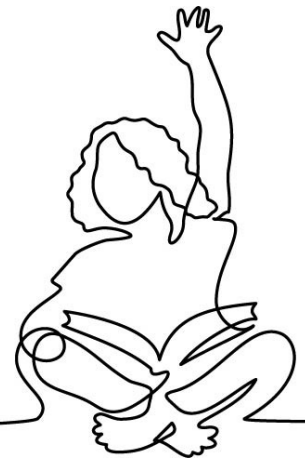
Call to Action

'Protection is possible' is available on the GEC website www.girlseducationchallenge.org

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